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757 frequently and may be repeated as many as four times during the
[854] first year of a child's life. An older child occasionally undergoes this
[164] treatment for a case of violent impetigo. Even a horse may be bled in
[232] this way for loss of appetite or other symptoms of disease.
[578] A woman whose face had been struck in an unusual display of temper underwent a blood letting soon after a swelling appeared. Her neighbor from across the street, a farmer like everyone else, sterilized her cheek with iodine and then cut it with a razor until the blood flowed freely. After a night's rest, the woman appeared outside her house without any signs of swelling and seemingly recovered.

753 As was pointed out previously, many diseases are believed to be
776 caused by supernatural forces: the ancestor spirits, spirits of those who
769 have just died, and natural deities and evil spirits who wander around
775 at night. The ancestors expect proper respect and attention and in gen-
[764] eral are benevolent unless neglected. Spirits of those who have recently died are most dangerous if the deceased is from another village. For deceased villagers one is careful to purify oneself after the funeral. The doors of each house are shut at night to protect against the evil spirits of the night air. Disease is less frequently caused by natural deities who have been neglected or mistreated.

● 755 In case of sickness or other unfortunate events in the family, some-
756 body may go to consult the *yuta,* a shaman who communicates with
[787] the supernatural. She discovers the cause of misfortune with the help of rice oracles and through powers of divination received through visions and hallucinations. There is no *yuta* living in Taira now, so that people have to travel to the other side of the island, an hour or more on foot, if they want to learn about the source of some evil. Taira
[769] people make many such trips to consult this shamanistic specialist. The most common cause of misfortune discovered by the *yuta* is neglect of ceremonies to the ancestral gods or, less frequently, the neglect of cere-
[793] monies to the natural deities. Although the *yuta* stands in no direct connection with the high priestess, she may suggest that her client ask the priestess for special prayers to rectify the negligence. In such cases, then, the competence of individuals in the family may not be adequate to deal with the ancestral world, and the priestess enters into family religion.

597 Some Taira parents still find an adoptive parent for a sickly child in
755 the belief that his own ancestors have caused bad health, and that this
769 can only be remedied by making a formal arrangement which transfers
[796] ancestral responsibility for the child to another family. The child remains with his own parents and only visits his foster parents during the New Year and the midsummer Buddhist *Bon* Festival, which honors ancestors, and perhaps at one or two other occasions during the year.

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year. On these occasions his parents take gifts of tea, noodles, and whatever else they can spare to the foster parents. During their visit the foster parents present the gift as an offering on the ancestral shrine and pray to their own ancestors, the guardians of the foster child. It is believed that this may help to offset the adverse effects of the child's own ancestors.

In spite of some treatments, such as blood letting and moxa cautery, which seem harsh to the unaccustomed observer, Taira people are extremely concerned about their sick. Illness, and most of all the need to remove the patient to the local dispensary or to a hospital in town, involves the whole family. No one likes to leave a sick person alone. His family and friends attend to him in such numbers that the small rooms are never large enough to hold all. The security given in everyday life by the presence of relatives and neighbors in the village continues during the critical period of illness. In the case of a fisherman from the south who was washed ashore in his boat after a storm, township officials kept the man continuous company in his dispensary room even though he was close to death. Female relatives cook meals and look after the comfort of a hospitalized person. This means that a young girl or an older woman will leave her usual work for days or weeks to attend the patient.

Because of intimacy in the home and visits to the sick, children are quite familiar with illness. A mother who has to go to the hospital takes her youngest child with her. After burning moxa weeds on her skin for two weeks had failed to cure a nephritic condition, one woman went to the hospital in town, taking her 8-months-old daughter although she did not have enough milk to nurse. The infant had to be given bottled milk prepared from cans. Meanwhile the older children remained under the care of their father.

There is, however, little concern with children who have minor ailments. A school child may be excused from attending classes. In one case a boy stayed home from school with stomach pains. He was happily playing with younger children in the street. One of the adult villagers walked past, stopped after seeing him, and inquired: "Why aren't you in school today?" When told by the boy that he had an upset stomach, the man ordered him to go home right away and stay inside or go to school. The boy's mother, although aware of her son's discomfort, did not pay any special attention to it.

Preventive medicine is officially the responsibility of the public health nurse. She advises people on proper preventive care, inocculates children against whooping cough, diphtheria, and other diseases. She also acts as an advisor to mothers on child care and occasionally helps with a birth if the doctor is unavailable. If a case is diagnosed as

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who have accepted them cannot afford to buy the recommended drugs. Furthermore, the choice between the bush doctor and the trained medical men in town is sometimes determined by lack of money to pay for the more expensive services.

Cleanliness of the village and general sanitation are theoretically under township control. Except for superficial biannual inspections, nothing much is done about them. Perhaps the Women's Association, once they carry out plans to take over this function, will be more effective.

There are several cases of physically deformed, mentally deficient, and mentally ill persons. A young man of about 20 years, born as an idiot or imbecile, lives in the back of his parents' house, protected from the gaze of outsiders. His family provides well for him, and when no stranger is around to embarrass the family, the grandfather may take him out to attend a village event. Another young man, who was normal, one day began to frighten his family and eventually the whole village by outbursts of violence. He attacked other persons and property. Nobody really knew how to cope with the situation, since the single mental hospital in Okinawa could not keep him longer than six months, and everybody realized that he was sick, not evil minded, when he broke bottles and other glassware in the village store. The family tried religious treatment and locked the man up but never for long, for he had intermittent periods of calm and seemingly rational behavior. Another man, during a busy day, complained of sudden headaches. Soon afterward he became severely depressed and attempted to commit suicide, quite an infrequent phenomenon in the Okinawan village.

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Chapter 10

Formal Education

The Japanese school system, which was introduced to Okinawa in the 1880's, reached Taira by 1891. At that time a small school was established in the village. Some of its early graduates are still alive and re-

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In addition to meeting with physical and emotional needs, the child must be protected from the nurtured by the numerous supernatural forces in the form of malevolent and benevolent spirits which operate to influence the course of an individual's life. There are lucky and unlucky days, years, and tides, which are believed to determine the fate of a person. Females born in the year of the monkey are considered unlucky, for they are thought to outlive their male contemporaries. Men dislike marrying them. Supplications are made and precautionary measures taken by adults to secure the newborn's life, happiness, and health. 776 777 854 [581]

Ancestral spirits influence the development and fate of the child. Occasionally a child who is the victim of ill health during his early years is adopted by a couple whose ancestral spirits are thought to be more favorable than his own on the dictate of the fortune teller. By mysterious calculations involving birth dates of the principals, the fortune teller uncovers some incompatibility and advises adoption. The child remains with his parents but worships the ancestral spirits of his adoptive parents. In this way parents seek to ensure the well-being of the child. 597 769 755

Mother interview data indicate the awareness of Taira people of the variations in personality among children of one family. Adults do in a large measure adapt their actions in accord with these differences. They recognize hereditary influences, but although a mother may comment on the similarity of temperament with regard to her child and other members in the family or kin group, there are no ideas or beliefs that the souls of deceased are inherited. Usually the mother, in describing the characteristics of the child, rarely goes beyond likenesses which can be attributed to herself or her husband. She is at a loss to explain the "very different child." "My eldest son has my nasty temper whereas my second daughter is not like either of us, very strange. All the others have a little of myself and my husband in them. We often wonder how it is that she is so unlike either of us." 155 828 858 [124]

A child born with two cowlicks predicates a "problem" to his parents. Parents often explain, "Oh, this child is very naughty, for as you can see, he has two cowlicks." Children often search each other's heads, and on discovering two instead of the single whorl, they shout in glee, "Naughty, naughty." One 4-year-old cuddled and hugged his newborn sister after searching her head. "You have two cowlicks just like me! You and I are 'naughty,' " he whispered to her. Turning to the adults in the room, he snapped his small bright eyes and grinned impishly as he reported his discovery joyfully. [826]

Twin births are disliked only because they place a burden on the 845

of the child; the child prays several times a year, on the important occasions, at the ancestral tablets of the adopted parent, but otherwise lives as before. The rationale of this practice may be: if one set of ancestors is not sufficient for the child, why not give him another?

Also related to the concept ugwambusuku is the notion that certain persons are destined to do more than just make offerings; some are to become kaminchu, "god persons", and play the principal roles at the family worship at the important holidays. If these persons shirk this duty they may become ill as a consequence. In certain persons, particularly older women, persistent illness and especially mental illness may be interpreted as a sure sign that the afflicted person ought to become a kaminchu. There is one well-recognized type of mental illness called 'kami-buri'; the person with this disorder constantly makes the gestures of prayer toward various persons and objects in an extravagant manner. Such a person is almost sure to become a religious practitioner after recovery. In fact some kaminchu positions must be filled by persons who have had 'kami-buri'. The yuta may also receive his, or more often her, vocation through such an illness. (Recently a visiting psychiatrist commented on the low number of cases at the Kin mental hospital. There are of course many cases that are not committed to the institution because Okinawan society has a place for them; they become its psychiatrists.)

Other concepts of disease will be discussed in the next section.

4. Medical Practice

Home Remedies There are a number of home remedies that are known to many persons, especially older women. These include the use of certain herbs, the letting of blood, the use of salt, prayer, swearing for exorcism, spells. These methods of treatment may be used by any old woman to the extent of her knowledge, but if the illness appears to be too serious for these treatments a professional medical practitioner may be consulted. However, the distinction between the professional person and the skilled amateur is not always clear.

Herbs are used for digestive disorders and particularly for female disorders. Tawada in his description of Okinawan flora[1] lists ten plants used for medicinal purposes, nine of which are said to be useful to female disorders along with a variety of other things ranging from toothaches to appendicitis.

Blood-letting is practiced on most infants as a cure for skin eruptions and is sometimes also used on adults. Shallow incisions are made with a razor to let out the "bad blood". These are made on a baby's buttocks and sometimes, though less frequently at the present time than in the past, on the face of an adult.

Salt is used for purification. A yuta whom I saw exorcise a house and yard took salt into his mouth and then spit it and threw it in the

1 Tawada, 1951.

direction of some tombs in order to prevent the ghosts from coming into the yard. I have also seen a woman who had some training as a nurse throw salt over a hospital patient who had just had a major operation; this was, she said, to cleanse the patient and the bed. Salt is also used as a home remedy for stomach disorders. A mother or grandmother may rub salt on the navel of a child suffering from a stomach ache. According to a small boy who received this treatment, it works.

Prayers are directed toward the supernatural beings who may help one overcome an illness. Curses and spells are directed toward malevolent beings, usually ghosts, when they are the cause of illness. Spells (mannaa, Japanese 'majinai') are verbal formulae that have a magical effect. Persons who are known to know spells and who may be asked to use them for the benefit of others are called mannaasaa ('majinai suru hito'), but spells seem to be useful only for a few diseases and so there is probably little specialization in their use.

To indicate something of the mixture of the natural and the supernatural (to use Western categories) in the treatment of illness in the Okinawan home, I have appended a description of the notions about and treatment of a few diseases as observed and as described by informants. These are all skin ailments.

1. Kamigasaa A kasa (skin eruption or rash) caused by kami (gods).

a. Irigasaa Identified as the same as the Japanese 'hashika' (dictionary translation, "measles"). This disease is caught only once, usually as a child. One must catch it before he becomes a complete person ('ichininmae'). Because children sometimes die of it, parents worry before they have caught it but are eager to have it over with. There are lighter and heavier "requests" ('o-negai') so that if a child has a "light request" the parents of other children may bring them in to lie beside the sick child and eat what food he leaves in order that they may contact the disease. But the disease is given by the god and therefore the other children get it only if they were meant to do so.

The disease begins with a fever and then a rash appears on the head and moves downward. If the rash does not appear the fever may rise and therefore parents worry if the rash is delayed. If there is no rash visible it may be that the rash is on the inside unable to get out and thus is causing the fever. This is dangerous.

Careful treatment is essential. The god comes around to see how the patient is being treated; if the family is not watching the child carefully, the god makes the disease worse. In a case observed, the mother kept the child in bed covered with a thick quilt and mosquito net and sat beside him, fanning him almost continuously. Polite language is also necessary in order not to offend the god.

755 757 753 On the 3rd, 5th, and 7th days after the appearance of the rash, mijinaarii ("water-stroking") is performed. It must be performed at the time of day when the tide is beginning to ebb. In the case observed it was performed by the child's maternal grandmother. The old woman first placed a cup of water before the incense-burner representing the Fire God, lit two sticks of incense and placed them in the burner, and prayed. Then she took the water and applied it to the child's forehead and cheeks, stroking lightly downward. The prayer, explained later, went, "A Dog boy (i.e. a boy born in the Year of the Dog) has a request of irigasa-ganashii (term of respect); today I perform the third day water-stroking and so I beg that you make him well."

During the period when the rash is present and perhaps for a few days after, the child ought not to be bathed or even have his face washed; water, except for that used in the "water-stroking", is harmful to the patient. During the course of the disease and for about a month after, the child must not be permitted to eat heavy or fatty foods; these would cause a congestion in the child's throat which might become dangerous.

(In the case observed I asked if it were not true that light might hurt the sick child's eyes; it was agreed that this was said to be true, but it seemed to be distinctly a secondary consideration. The question, in fact, led to a discussion of the decline in the practice of keeping doors tightly closed in order to keep out ghosts.)

b. Mijigasaa, "water rash", a second type of kamigasaa. It is also caused by a god, but it is not as serious. It may be caught two or three times. The eruptions contain a fluid, hence the name. The rash spreads if the fluid touches other parts of the body, so the eruptions are covered with sweet-potato starch when they begin to run. Treatment also includes "water-stroking" and certain food restrictions while the rash is present.

2. Kaji-ooraa-kasa : rash accompanied by itching but no running. It may be caught by either a child or an adult. It is caused by yanakaji ("bad winds", i.e. ghosts). It may be contracted either while out walking in the hills or while at home. This disease must be treatly unkindly; the patient should be sworn at and slapped. The itching may be stopped by the use of a pair of 'zōri' (a Japanese style sandal). The person who knows how to perform the treatment first heats the 'zōri' over a fire and then while uttering a spell (mannaa, Japanese 'majinai') he rubs their undersides over the face and body of the afflicted person. He then takes the 'zōri' to a crossroads and puts them in the middle where someone will step on them. This will stop the itching.

An incident was related where this disease was confused with the first one described. At the end of the war, in Ishikawa, an old man of 75 became ill and broke out in large pox. His family believed his disease was caused by yanakaji so they gathered around him and shouted curses ("Eat feces", etc.) at him to chase the yanakaji away. But the old man merely got worse. Then they consulted a yuta and were told that the illness was

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not caused by ghosts but by a god and therefore they should speak politely. They did so and the old man recovered.

3. Tangasa A rash with running eruptions, which may be contracted by both children and adults. It begins at the nape of the neck or at the base of the spine. If it spreads all the way around the neck or trunk the patient is in danger of losing his life. One ought not to say the name of this disease and so instead of saying tangasa, people say naa-irannuu-gasa, "the rash that is not called by name".

A person with this disease may be treated by a mannaasaa (spell-worker, in Japanese, 'majinau hito'). The patient is taken to the mannaasaa early in the morning. The mannaasaa, before drinking morning tea even, takes a full puff of tobacco, blows it on the affected spot, and recites a spell. He must say the words without taking a breath and without making a mistake for them to be effective. The words are addressed to the disease, which is probably caused by ghosts.

4. Heegasaa From hee, "skin"; a condition in which the face and scalp become a mass of scabs and the eyes matter. The condition occurs in both children and adults, but seems more common among smaller children. It is treated in small children by blood-letting (hanchuung, in Japanese 'sakuru'). Most infants are said to be bled for breaking out on the buttocks. The buttocks are cut with a razor blade just enough to draw blood. If heegasaa develops it is because the bad blood has not all been drawn out, and so the treatment may be repeated. If the bad blood is not drawn out in childhood the condition may become much worse in adult life. (The mild condition for which infants are bled looks to me like what would be called "diaper rash" in America. The heegasaa is a truly hideous condition which afflicts a number of small children and a few older persons. One of the USCAR medical officers referred to it as "scruff" and expressed the belief that it could be checked in its early stages with a frequent application of warm water and soap. Once it gets started, however, exposure to dirt and flies must make improvement difficult. One case encountered by Lebra had continued for several years. An informant mentioned cases from before the war that had lasted from childhood into adult life; two brothers had heegasaa so that they could not go to school, could not marry, and did nothing but stay at home and scratch themselves. It was said that even more than they feared policemen, they feared flies. This informant believed their condition was caused by their not having been properly bled when children; another informant suggested congenital syphilis.)

5. Ha'imakaa A kind of rash that may be caught by a person who happens to pass by a tree called makaa. This tree causes the illness, but not to persons who have the Okinawan name (warabinaa) of Makaa. Therefore a person not so named who sees that he is passing a makaa tree will say, "I am named Makaa too, so if you give it to me I'll break your neck." If this fails and he contracts the illness, he may go back and tie rocks to the limbs of the tree so that they bend down, and repeat his threat.